42: Vanoverbergh E-5 (no date) 1936-1938 OA1 Philippines
Apayao OA5
Isneg

many details as possible, although I am far from claiming that my study about Isneg religion and morality has so far been exhaustive or that my knowledge of these subjects cannot be improved upon. A whole lifetime would scarcely be sufficient to disentagle all the intricate knots, the more so that, especially as regards religion, the Isneg are sometimes far from logical in their reasoning.

In religious instruction the *dorarákit* or shaman plays the dominant rôle, as it is she who conducts religious ceremonies, and it is she through whom the spirits and the souls of the dead are supposed to communicate with man. Now let us see in how far the shaman imparts formal instruction, and in how far young people have to learn by merely looking on.

The *dorarákit* directly teaches her pupils by explaining to them the meaning of the rites and ceremonies, at the time of some *sáy-ám* or other sacrifice accompanied by *maxaníto*, and almost exclusively on such occasions. Her pupils at the time are first of all the young *dorarákit*, who have been chosen and consecrated mostly when still in their infancy, and secondly all members of the younger generation who are willing to listen. Consequently this kind of teaching is done while the ceremonies in question are under way and it is illustrated by their performance. It is not the place here to enter into details about the ceremonies just referred to; it will suffice to say that the *sáy-ám* is a kind of public sacrifice in which dogs and pigs are offered to the spirits, and that *maxaníto* refers to the action of the shaman at the time she is supposed to be possessed either by a spirit or by the soul of a deceased person, who speaks through her mouth. In this the Isneg shaman differs from the Kankanay one; the latter is usually supposed merely to communicate with beings of the other world, to talk to them, while in the case of the Isneg the spirit is supposed to talk through the shaman. Besides, a Kankanay shaman plays a very secondary rôle: she is mostly of use only at the time of sickness, when she has altercations with the spirits who are supposed to cause the disease or when she goes around to look for the *ab-abiik* (Kankanay) or soul, which a sick person is supposed to have lost; while sacrifices, whether public or private, are presided over by men. Let this be enough for the time being.

I just stated that the Isneg shaman explains the meaning of religious rites and ceremonies to her puipls. The manner of conducting these ceremonies, however, is not formally taught: in this respect a young *dorarákit* is a mere looker-on. When the time comes for the

42: Vanoverbergh E-5 (no date) 1936-1938 OA1 Philippines
Apayao OA5
Isneg

lighten that of the young shaman who has to confide these things to memory. Here stops the exclusive rôle of the *dorarákit* or shaman as far as religious instruction is concerned.

Dancing and singing, whether religious or otherwise, are learned by pure imitation. Songs are improvised most of the time; the only exceptions are a few scattered terms and a limited number of sentences, more especially a kind of refrain or burden, that recurs at the end of every verse or every stanza in most Isneg songs. These traditional terms and sentences are mostly archaic, and their meaning is a mystery to at least the generality of the Isneg; perhaps some of them have never had any meaning at all.

All Isneg beliefs, whether they have to do with magic or with religion, whether they refer to the world of spirits or to the state of a person after death, are simply picked up, or, as the Isneg put it, "they hear them (*maxi-náda da*)." This means that there is no formal instruction about the matter. Aged persons, particularly old women, and still more especially shamans, freely talk about these things at the slightest provocation, and youngsters are always eager to listen to them. This, however, does not exclude the possibility and even the probability of the members of the older generation talking about magical or religious beliefs purposely and with the direct intention of telling the children about them. And that such instruction, whether intended or not, is sometimes really very efficacious is proved by the fact that I have had among my informants girls of barely ten years old who know everything about certain spirits and could vividly describe them to me. This is the more easily understood when one remembers that all these extraordinary details agree very well with the usual trend of the Isneg mind toward the supernatural, so that the children experience little difficulty in keeping them impressed upon their memory.

Myths and legends, stories and tales, which by the way are sometimes far from being religious, are mostly related by the parents and grandparents in the evening, when the whole family is stretched out on the floor and ready to sleep. The Isneg are not in the habit of making much use of artificial light, and they very often go to sleep almost at sunset, so that there is usually ample time for the old people to comply with the wishes of the youngsters, who among them as well as among us, are always eager to hear a story, and the more fantastic the story, the better. Even young boys and girls are sometimes invited to play the rôle of story-teller, provided they are known